

April 14, 1920; Stag Canon Nos. 1 and 6 Mines, Dawson, N. Mex.; 5 Killed

(From Bureau of Mines report, by J. J. Forbes)

About 8:25 p.m. an explosion in No. 6 mine was communicated to adjoining sections of No. 1 mine, partly wrecking the No. 1 fan and demolishing the No. 6 fan.

The shot firers had loaded the holes, connected the leads, and signed out on the surface before the master switch was thrown to fire the shots. Also before the switch was thrown they had returned underground to hasten their reinspection of the faces required after shooting.

The explosion caught them about 800 feet inside the portal. Gas and dust were ignited by overloaded blown-out shots or arcing lead wires as the switch was left in. Ventilation was neglected, in that accumulations of gas were not removed from idle sections after occasional fan shutdowns. This gas moved into active sections. Sprinkling had been discontinued.

Electric cap lamps were used, and rock-dust barriers were installed in No. 1 mine. The explosion had almost died out when it reached the barriers.